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ABSTRACT

This set of 10 fact sheets (each 2 to 4 pages long) addresses aspects of Reading Recovery, a program that helps children to be proficient readers and writers by the end of the first grade. It discusses the basic facts of Reading Recovery; Reading Recovery for Spanish literacy; Reading Recovery lessons; Reading Recovery professional development; facts and figures of Reading Recovery; measuring learner success; sustained gains over time; 10 principles in literacy programs that work; Reading Recovery and comprehensive school reform; and 10 frequently asked questions about Reading Recovery. The folder containing the fact sheets offers a vision statement, mission statement, and purpose of the Reading Recovery Council of North America, as well as a brief description of what Reading Recovery provides. (RS)

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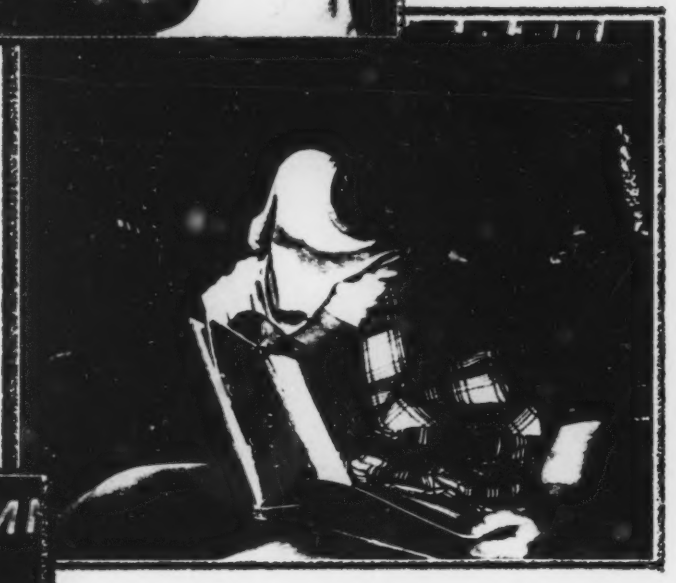
If children are apparently unable to learn, we should assume that we have not as yet found the right way to teach them.

— Marie Clay



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READING RECOVERY

Documented by 20 years of research and evaluation, Reading Recovery

- Provides a one-to-one tutoring program for first graders who are having extreme difficulty learning to read and write.
- Provides an intensive, year-long teacher education program that involves analysis of behavior and teaching for expert decision making.
- Provides ongoing professional development for teachers.
- Provides intervention at a critical time — before the cycle of failure begins.
- Provides a safety net for low-achieving children as a supplement to a good classroom program.
- Provides short-term intervention — 12 to 20 weeks.
- Provides 30 minutes daily of extra instruction.
- Provides reading, writing, and attention to letters, sounds, and words.
- Provides children the chance to become independent readers and writers.
- Provides an opportunity for accelerated progress.
- Provides lessons in either English or Spanish, depending on the language of instruction in the classroom.

From Askew, B.J., Fountas, I.C., Lyons, C.A., Pinnell, G.S., & Schmitt, M.C. (1998). *Reading Recovery review: Understandings, outcomes, and implications.* Columbus, OH: Reading Recovery Council of North America, Inc.

READING RECOVERY® COUNCIL OF NORTH AMERICA

"Reading Recovery is the best evidence yet of the direct link between good design and education excellence."[1]

— K.G. Wilson and B. Daviss

READING RECOVERY: BASIC FACTS

GOAL

The goal of Reading Recovery is to dramatically reduce the number of first-grade students who have extreme difficulty learning to read and write and to reduce the cost of these learners to educational systems.

WHAT

Reading Recovery is a highly effective short-term intervention of one-to-one tutoring for low-achieving first graders. The intervention is most effective when it is available to all students who need it and is used as a supplement to good classroom teaching.

WHO

Reading Recovery serves the ***lowest-achieving first graders*** — the students who are not catching on to the complex set of concepts that make reading and writing possible.

HOW

Individual students receive a half-hour lesson each school day for 12 to 20 weeks with a specially trained Reading Recovery teacher. As soon as students can read within the average range of their class and demonstrate that they can continue to achieve, their lessons are discontinued, and new students begin individual instruction.

OUTCOMES

There are two positive outcomes for students:

- Over 15 years of Reading Recovery in North America, 82% of students who complete the full 12- to 20-week series of lessons, and 59% of all students who have any lessons in Reading Recovery, can read and write with the average range of performance of their class. Follow-up studies indicate that most Reading Recovery students also do well on standardized tests and maintain their gains in later years.
- The few students who are still having difficulty after a full series of lessons are referred for further evaluation. They may be candidates for longer-term programs.

READING RECOVERY® COUNCIL OF NORTH AMERICA

1929 Kenny Road
Suite 100
Columbus OH 43210-1069
phone (614) 292-7111
fax (614) 292-4404
www.readingrecovery.org

[1] Wilson, K.G. & Daviss, B. (1994). *Redesigning Education.* New York: Teachers College Press.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Professional development is an essential part of Reading Recovery. Training utilizes a three-tiered approach that includes teachers, teacher leaders, and university trainers. Professional development for teachers and teacher leaders begins with year-long graduate level study and is followed by ongoing training in succeeding years. In Reading Recovery, teachers develop observational skills and a repertoire of intervention strategies tailored to meet the individual needs of at-risk students.

HISTORY OF SUCCESS

Reading Recovery has a strong tradition of success with the hardest-to-teach children. Developed in New Zealand over 20 years ago, Reading Recovery now also operates in 49 states, the District of Columbia, Department of Defense Dependents Schools, plus Canada, the United Kingdom, and Australia. In its 15-year history in the United States, Reading Recovery has served more than 700,000 students.

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"Está muy contento, tiene más confianza en si mismo porque sabe leer mejor."

— Fort Worth, Texas ISD Parent

READING RECOVERY FOR SPANISH LITERACY DESCUBRIENDO LA LECTURA (DLL)

GOAL

The goal of Descubriendo La Lectura (DLL) is to dramatically reduce the number of bilingual first-grade students who have extreme difficulty learning to read and write in bilingual classrooms and to reduce the cost of these learners to educational systems.

WHAT

DLL is a reconstruction of Reading Recovery for Spanish-speaking children. DLL is a highly effective short-term intervention of one-to-one tutoring for low-achieving first graders.

WHO

DLL serves the ***lowest-achieving first graders*** who are receiving their classroom instruction in Spanish. In 1998–1999, 3,015 children were served by DLL.

HOW

Individual students receive a half-hour lesson each school day for 12 to 20 weeks with a specially trained DLL teacher. As soon as students can read within the average reading performance of their class and demonstrate that they can continue to achieve, their lessons are discontinued, and new students begin individual instruction.

OUTCOMES

There are two positive outcomes for DLL students:

- Outcomes for DLL students are comparable to outcomes for Reading Recovery students. About 8 of 10 students who receive the full series of lessons are able to read and write with the average range of performance of their class.
- The few students who are still having difficulty after a full series of lessons are referred for further evaluation. They may be candidates for longer-term programs.

WHERE

DLL began 10 years ago in Tucson. DLL sites now operate in Arizona, California, Colorado, Illinois, Massachusetts, New York, Texas, and Washington.

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1929 Kenny Road
Suite 100
Columbus OH 43210-1069
phone (614) 292-7111
fax (614) 292-4404
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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Teachers and teacher leaders must be certified bilingual educators with experience in a primary bilingual education classroom. Although the theoretical principles that underlie Reading Recovery are the same for DLL, procedural and training issues differ because English and Spanish function differently as languages. Therefore, if candidates initially are trained in Reading Recovery in English, they must receive an additional year of training to serve Spanish-speaking students. If the teachers or teacher leaders are trained in Spanish, they must receive an additional year of training to serve English-speaking students.

A FOLLOW UP STUDY

In 1997, a national study of former DLL students in second and third grade revealed that Descubriendo La Lectura had positive impact on Spanish-speaking students.[1]

- 92% of second graders and 93% of third graders who completed their series of lessons met or exceeded the average band on Spanish Text Reading.
- 75% of second graders who completed their series of lessons, and 79% of third graders who completed their lessons, met or exceeded the average band on the standardized Spanish reading measure (SABE-2 and SABE-3).

[1] Escamilla, K., Loera, M., Ruiz, O., & Rodriguez, Y. (1998). An examination of sustaining effects in Descubriendo La Lectura programs. *Literacy Teaching and Learning: An International Journal of Early Reading and Writing, 3:2*, 59-81.

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"I feel good and great because I can read a lot of things. Now I can help myself and I don't need my Reading Recovery teacher to help me."

— *Texas Child*

READING RECOVERY LESSONS

LESSON OBJECTIVE

The objective of Reading Recovery lessons is to promote accelerated learning so that students catch up to their peers, close the achievement gap as quickly as possible, and continue to learn independently.

INDIVIDUAL ATTENTION

- Reading Recovery teachers work with one student at a time over a 12- to 20-week period. Each daily 30-minute lesson is tailored to the needs of the individual child.
- Reading Recovery teachers generally teach no more than four or five students per day in individual lessons. During the remainder of the day, teachers are often assigned to other duties such as classroom teaching or small group instruction.

ASSESSMENT

- Reading Recovery teachers are trained to use Clay's *An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement*[1] to assess each child's strengths and confusions.
- The first ten sessions provide further opportunities for assessment as the child engages in reading and writing.
- The teacher takes a running record of the child's progress every day and uses the data to plan future lessons.

LESSON CONTENT

- Each lesson consists of reading familiar stories, reading a story that was read for the first time the day before, working with letters and/or words using magnetic letters, writing a story, assembling a cut-up story, and reading a new book.
- The teacher teaches and demonstrates problem-solving strategies and provides just enough support to help the child develop effective strategies.

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1929 Kenny Road
Suite 100
Columbus OH 43210-1069
phone (614) 292-7111
fax (614) 292-4404
www.readingrecovery.org

[1] Clay, M.M. (1993). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

PHONEMIC AWARENESS, PHONICS, SPELLING, AND COMPREHENSION

- Every lesson incorporates learning about letter/sound relationships.
- Children are taught to segment sounds and work with spelling patterns.
- Reading Recovery encourages comprehension and problem-solving with print, so that decoding is purposeful and students read fluently.

OUTCOMES

The series of Reading Recovery lessons has two possible positive outcomes:

- The child no longer requires extra help and is able to make progress with classroom instruction. (Over 15 years of implementation in the United States, 82% of students who complete the full series of lessons and 59% of all students who have any Reading Recovery lessons achieved reading and writing success.)
- Additional evaluation is recommended and further action is initiated to help the child continue making progress.

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"...As schools systematize and create more opportunities for serious staff development, the thoroughness of the Reading Recovery model seems to be well worth emulating."[1]

— R. Herman and S. Stringfield

READING RECOVERY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Professional development and continuing education are hallmarks of Reading Recovery.
- Reading Recovery conducts ongoing professional development at three levels: university trainers, teacher leaders, and teachers.
- Continuing education ensures the quality of lessons for each child and promotes success across all schools that implement Reading Recovery.

UNIVERSITY TRAINERS

- Trainers are faculty members working in university-based academic settings.
- In the United States, instruction for trainers is provided by The Ohio State University and Texas Woman's University.
- The one-year residency program prepares postdoctoral university faculty to train Reading Recovery teacher leaders.
- After their initial training, university trainers teach at least one child in Reading Recovery each year.

TEACHER LEADERS

- Teacher leader candidates must have a master's degree and leadership potential. They are selected by a school district or consortium of school districts that has made a commitment to implement Reading Recovery.
- The teacher leader candidate attends one of 25 university training centers in North America for a year of full-time training.
- Candidates teach four Reading Recovery students daily. They attend graduate-level classes, clinical and leadership practicums, and seminars in reading, writing, and adult learning theory. In addition, they participate in teacher training classes and conduct fieldwork at established sites. They attend professional conferences and prepare their home districts for Reading Recovery implementation.

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1929 Kenny Road
Suite 100
Columbus OH 43210-1069
phone (614) 292-7111
fax (614) 292-4404
www.readingrecovery.org

[1] Herman, R. & Stringfield, S. (1997). *Ten promising programs for educating all children: Evidence of impact.* Arlington, VA: Educational Research Service.

- After their initial training, teacher leaders teach at least two children daily in Reading Recovery, conduct teacher training classes, and provide implementation leadership.

- Teacher leaders are responsible for data collection on all Reading Recovery children in their area. These data are used to improve performance and to prepare reports.

TEACHERS

- Reading Recovery teacher candidates must be certified teachers selected for training by their school system. In the United States, teacher leaders provide Reading Recovery teachers with a full academic year of training during a three-hour class one day a week.

- During the training year each teacher receives graduate credit while working with four children on a daily basis and attending a weekly class. In addition, each teacher-in-training is observed at least four times by the teacher leader.

- Training integrates theory and practice. A one-way mirror enables trainees to observe, discuss, and reflect on Reading Recovery lessons with the teacher leader.

- Reading Recovery teachers develop effective observational skills and a repertoire of teaching approaches that can be tailored to meet the needs of individual students.

KEEPING TRAINING UP-TO-DATE

- For ongoing training, Reading Recovery teachers attend at least six continuing contact sessions each year conducted by teacher leaders. At least four of these sessions include observing a lesson through a one-way mirror.

- Teacher leaders annually participate in professional development conducted by the university trainers and visit colleagues to learn from their peers. One of the sessions includes the annual Teacher Leader Institute.

- University trainers attend at least two professional development sessions annually.

- The Reading Recovery Council of North America (RRCNA) is the membership organization that links Reading Recovery professionals around the world. RRCNA provides research findings, newsletters, publications, and conferences for its members.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

- Ongoing professional development, coupled with strict adherence to the RRCNA standards and guidelines, assures the quality of Reading Recovery.

- Regular data collection on student performance provides the basis for continuous quality improvement.

LONG-TERM IMPACT OF TEACHER LEADER TRAINING

Training a teacher leader is an investment that pays dividends over time. A single teacher leader can train as many as 12 teachers a year with each teacher serving at least eight students per year. Under ideal conditions as many as 400 students could be reached over five years through the training of a single teacher leader.

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"When you compare the success rate of Reading Recovery with other programs that keep children for years and never get them reading on grade level, Reading Recovery is a bargain!"[1]

— P.M. Cunningham & S.R. Allington

READING RECOVERY: FACTS & FIGURES
(United States, 1984–1999)

Reading Recovery begins with the lowest-achieving first graders — the students who are not catching on to the complex set of concepts that make reading and writing possible.

15-YEAR TOTALS

701,333 Students served through Reading Recovery

503,800 Students received the full series of lessons (up to 20 weeks)

412,662 Students successfully met "discontinued" criteria. Criteria require that students

- Read within average range of performance for their class and
- Demonstrate independent reading and writing strategies that will allow continued achievement.

READING RECOVERY CHILDREN SERVED AND RESULTS

	Children Served	Completed Lessons	Discontinued	Percent
1984–85	110	55	37	67%
1985–86	230	136	99	73%
1986–87	2,048	1,336	1,059	79%
1987–88	3,649	2,648	2,269	86%
1988–89	4,772	3,609	2,994	83%
1989–90	7,778	5,840	4,888	84%
1990–91	12,605	9,283	8,126	88%
1991–92	21,821	16,026	13,499	84%
1992–93	36,443	26,582	22,109	83%
1993–94	56,077	40,493	33,243	82%
1994–95	81,220	57,712	46,637	81%
1995–96	99,617	71,193	59,266	83%
1996–97	109,879	78,935	65,551	83%
1997–98	122,935	88,929	73,610	83%
1998–99	142,149	101,023	79,275	79%
Total	**701,333**	**503,800**	**412,662**	**82%**

National Data Evaluation Center, The Ohio State University

Children Served – Children who received at least one lesson in Reading Recovery
Completed Lessons – Children who received at least 20 weeks of the 30 minute individual lessons or reached average range performance in fewer weeks
Discontinued [2] – Children who met rigorous criteria for performing within average range of classmates
Percent – Percent of children who received the full series of lessons and were successfully discontinued from Reading Recovery because they reached the average performance range of their classmates

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1929 Kenny Road
Suite 100
Columbus OH 43210-1069
phone (614) 292-7111
fax (614) 292-4404
www.readingrecovery.org

[1] Cunningham P.M. & Allington, S.R. (1994). *Classrooms that work*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers. 255.

[2] Criteria for "discontinuing" students are discussed more completely in Askew, B.J., Fountas, I.C., Lyons, C.A., Pinnell, G.S., & Schmitt, M.C. (1998). *Reading Recovery review: Understandings, outcomes, and implications.* Columbus, OH: Reading Recovery Council of North America, Inc.

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15-YEAR SUCCESS RATE

82% of students who received the full series of lessons read within average range of their class by the end of first grade.

59% of all students served, even for one lesson, successfully met "discontinued" criteria.

UNIVERSITY TRAINERS, TEACHER LEADERS, TEACHERS, SCHOOL DISTRICTS, AND SCHOOLS

	University Trainers	Teacher Leaders	Teachers	School Districts	Schools
1984–85	0	0	16	1	6
1985–86	1	3	58	23	35
1986–87	3	27	280	108	255
1987–88	3	45	531	143	227
1988–89	6	43	732	265	623
1989–90	11	54	1,163	332	892
1990–91	13	80	1,850	508	1,406
1991–92	19	155	3,164	798	2,336
1992–93	24	259	5,343	1,246	3,731
1993–94	33	388	8,182	1,905	5,523
1994–95	39	510	12,084	2,543	7,784
1995–96	39	625	14,153	2,939	9,062
1996–97	42	667	15,843	3,241	9,815
1997–98	35	739	18,831	3,596	10,612
1998–99	38	770	18,584	3,450	11,102

National Data Evaluation Center, The Ohio State University

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"Reading Recovery…teaches children how to read and reduces the number of students who are labeled 'learning disabled' and the number of students who are placed in remedial reading programs."[1]

— Learning Disabilities (1995)

MEASURING LEARNER SUCCESS (1984–1999)

Reading Recovery student outcomes are documented by 15 years of data on every child served in the United States. Reading Recovery has specific measurable goals for each child. The achievement of goals is measured using the *Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement.*[2]

WHAT IS SUCCESS?

Success in Reading Recovery means a student

- has demonstrated independent reading and writing strategies that will allow continued achievement.
- can read within the average range of the class reading performance.
- has made accelerated gains — not only increasing knowledge but doing so at an accelerated rate.

WHAT IS THE READING RECOVERY SUCCESS RATE?

- Reading Recovery serves the lowest-achieving first graders — the students who are not catching on to the complex set of concepts that make reading and writing possible.
- Over the 15 years of Reading Recovery in North America, 82% of students who complete the full 12- to 20-week series of lessons, and 59% of all students who have any lessons, can read and write within the average range of their class.
- Follow-up studies indicate that most Reading Recovery students also do well on standardized tests and maintain their gains in later years.
- The few students who are still having difficulty after a full series of lessons are referred for further evaluation. They may be candidates for longer-term programs.
- Even children who do not successfully complete the series of lessons make important gains on all six measures of reading as assessed on the *Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement.*
- With good classroom teaching, Reading Recovery students sustain their gains in subsequent years.

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1929 Kenny Road
Suite 100
Columbus OH 43210-1069
phone (614) 292-7111
fax (614) 292-4404
www.readingrecovery.org

[1] International Reading Association. (1995). *Learning disabilities – A barrier to literacy instruction.* Washington, DC: Author.

[2] Clay, M.M. (1993). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

HOW IS READING RECOVERY RESEARCH CARRIED OUT?

Research and evaluation are carried out by the National Data Evaluation Center (NDEC) for Reading Recovery housed at The Ohio State University. NDEC collects data from every site in the United States each year, including pre- and post-intervention measures on every child who receives Reading Recovery instruction. Each child is assessed formally before entering Reading Recovery, again upon leaving Reading Recovery, and at the end of the school year. This assessment provides direct accountability for the child's progress and is a record of strengths and continuing needs for the child.

Besides NDEC evaluation at The Ohio State University, Reading Recovery evaluation and research are conducted by university training centers throughout the United States. Evaluation also includes qualitative data on implementation such as surveys from Reading Recovery educators, administrators, and parents.

WHAT ARE THE CRITERIA FOR SUCCESS?

Criteria for a child's successful completion of Reading Recovery includes the ability to read texts that have

- long stretches of print with few pictures.
- full pages of print without pictures.
- complex story structures that require sophisticated ways of understanding.
- complex ideas that require background knowledge to understand and interpret.
- many multisyllable words.
- new words to decode without help from illustrations.
- some vocabulary words that are unfamiliar.

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"Reading Recovery provides the best evidence of long-term success for the largest proportion of students served."[1]

— S.A. Walmsley and R.L. Allington

SUSTAINED GAINS OVER TIME

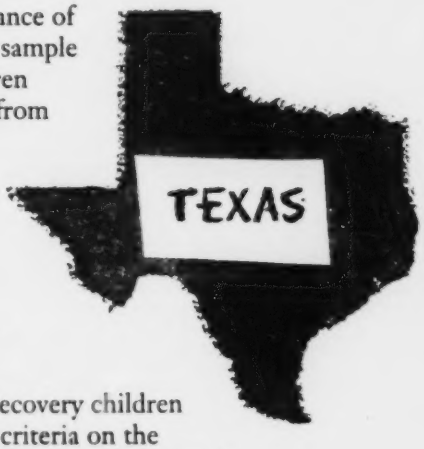
Reading Recovery has consistently proven its ability to bring the lowest-achieving first-grade students up to the level of their peers. In addition, follow-up studies of Reading Recovery students reveal that the majority of students continue to perform within an average range of performance when compared with their peers. This reduces their need for long-term remediation. Evaluation data reveal two key points:

1. Most students who successfully complete Reading Recovery sustain their gains over time.
2. Performance after Reading Recovery intervention seems to become stronger over time.

Follow-up studies from six states demonstrate sustained gains over time.[2]

Texas Woman's University, 1995[3]

The Texas Follow-Up Study compared literacy performance of discontinued Reading Recovery children with a random sample of their peers in second, third, and fourth grades. Children from 48 schools participated, with sample sizes ranging from 88 to 103 students per group. Students were evaluated using standardized tests as well as tests of text reading, written retellings, and classroom teacher questionnaires.



The test found

- Scores on standardized measures increased across grade levels.
- In fourth grade, approximately 70% of Reading Recovery children had scores considered average or meeting passing criteria on the Gates MacGinitie and the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TASS).
- On tests of text reading at third and fourth grades and on retelling measures at all levels, Reading Recovery students performed as well as students in the random sample group.
- Classroom teachers perceived most former Reading Recovery children as performing within average range on literacy tasks.

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1929 Kenny Road
Suite 100
Columbus OH 43210-1069
phone (614) 292-7111
fax (614) 292-4404
www.readingrecovery.org

[1] Walmsley, S.A. & Allington, R.L. (Eds.). (1995). Redefining and reforming instructional support programs for at-risk students. In *No quick fix: Rethinking literacy programs in America's elementary schools.* New York: Teachers College Press.

[2] Askew, B.J., Fountas, I.C., Lyons, C.A., Pinnell, G.S., & Schmitt, M.C. (1998). *Reading Recovery review: Understandings, outcomes, and implications.* Columbus, OH: Reading Recovery Council of North America, Inc.

[3] Askew, B.J., Wickstrom, C., & Frasier, D.F. (1999). *An exploration of literacy behaviors of children following an early intervention program.* Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association (AERA) Conference. New York, NY.

The Ohio State University, 1997[4]

This study looked at performance of Reading Recovery students on the Ohio Fourth Grade Proficiency Test. The subjects were children served by Reading Recovery in 1991 and 1992. A total of 2,714 children were tested on reading and 2,813 tested on writing in 1991; in 1992, 2,994 students were tested on reading and 3,002 were tested on writing. Of all eligible districts, 69% reported data.

For the 1991–1992 cohort,

- 71% were at or above proficiency in reading
- 75% were above proficiency in writing

For the 1992–1993 cohort,

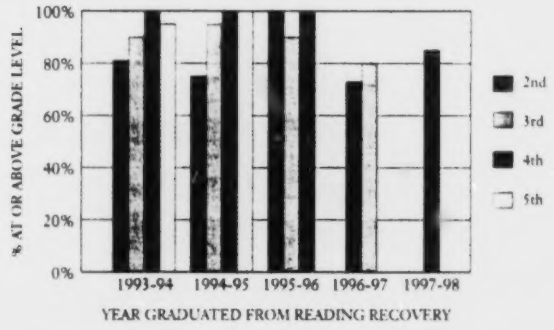
- 72% were at or above proficiency in reading
- 67% were at or above proficiency in writing

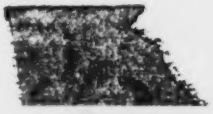
This study included *all* children served by Reading Recovery, not just those children who had successfully completed their series of lessons.

Marietta, Georgia, 1999[5]

This Follow-Up Study from Cobb County Schools in Georgia tested text reading level for 294 Reading Recovery students who had successfully completed their series of Reading Recovery lessons between 1993 and 1998. Using the text reading level task on Marie Clay's *Observation Survey*, students were measured at the end of second, third, fourth, and fifth grade. Results demonstrate that most children continued to score at or above the average text level for their class as they progressed through the grades. The chart shows the percent of students at or above grade level for each of five years.

FOLLOW-UP STUDY OF READING RECOVERY STUDENTS
(PERCENT AT OR ABOVE GRADE LEVEL)





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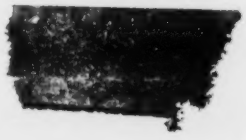

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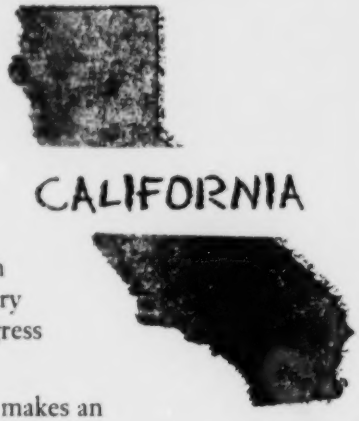
[4] Hovest, C. & Day, J. (1997, February). *Sustaining gains: Ohio's Reading Recovery students in fourth grade.* Paper presented at the 12th Annual Reading Recovery Conference and National Institute, Columbus, OH.

[5] Williamson, D. & Johnson, C. (1999). *The effectiveness of Reading Recovery in Cobb County, Georgia.* Presented as a written report to the administration of Cobb County Public Schools.

California State University – San Luis Coastal Unified School District, 1998[6]

This study of former Reading Recovery students in the San Luis Coastal Unified School District used two standardized tests to measure students' continuing achievement in second through fifth grades.



Researchers measured the achievement of 760 students who were served in Reading Recovery between 1993 and 1998. Student performance in second through fifth grades was assessed using the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) and Stanford Achievement Test, Ninth Edition (SAT-9). Authors reported that "in most cases, more than three-fourths of the children who successfully completed Reading Recovery achieved standardized test scores in the average or above average range." Considering that these Reading Recovery students began at the bottom of their class in first grade, their sustained progress through fifth grade is impressive.

The *ERS Spectrum* summarized the study's significance this way: "This study makes an important contribution to the literature because it:

- tracks a cohort of Reading Recovery students through the end of fifth grade, with a large enough student population to yield significant results, and
- uses standardized achievement tests as measures of student achievement, rather than relying solely on measures that are directly tied to Reading Recovery instruction.

Thus, the study offers new evidence of the effectiveness of the Reading Recovery program."[7]

Sioux Falls, 1999[8]

This five-year study analyzed performance of students who had successfully completed Reading Recovery in a Sioux Falls, South Dakota school district between 1993 and 1998. Student performance was measured by results of the Stanford Achievement Test Ninth Edition (grades 2, 4, 5, 6) and the District Reading Assessment (grade 3). In all, 1,419 students were served by Reading Recovery during the five-year study. Of those, 61% (871 students) successfully completed their series of lessons. Test results by grade level revealed that those students who successfully completed Reading Recovery continued to perform at or above the average range as they progressed through grade levels.

CONTINUED PERFORMANCE OF SIOUX FALLS STUDENTS WHO COMPLETED READING RECOVERY

	Below Average	Average	Above Average
2nd grade	26.4%	66.1%	7.5%
4th grade	16.0%	72.5%	11.5%
5th grade	12.8%	78.2%	9.0%
6th grade	17.0%	69.5%	13.5%

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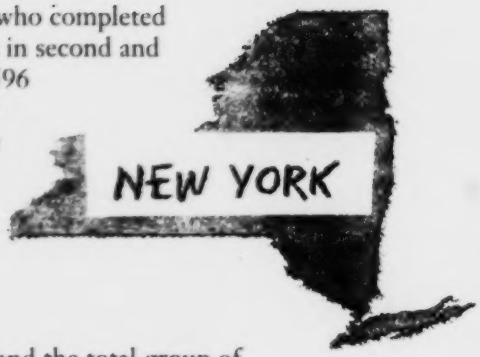
[6] Brown, W., Denton, E., Kelly, P., & Neal, S. (1999, Winter). Reading Recovery effectiveness: A five-year success story in San Luis Coastal Unified School District. *ERS Spectrum: Journal of School Research and Information, 17:1,* 3-12.

[7] Ibid, 3.

[8] Homan, P. (1999). *Reading Recovery longitudinal analysis.* Sioux Falls, SD.

New York University, 1996[9]



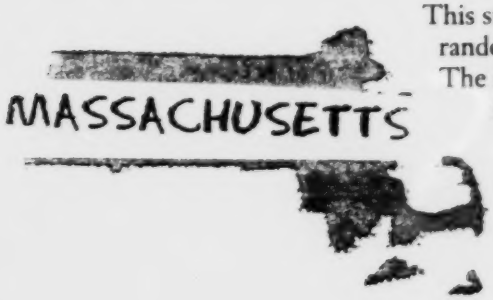
A follow-up study compared achievement of four cohorts of children who completed Reading Recovery with randomly selected groups of grade-level peers in second and third grade. Between 1990 and 1994, researchers collected data on 1,596 Reading Recovery second graders (74% of those who had successfully completed their series of lessons) and 604 third graders (58% of those who had successful completed their lessons). The randomly selected comparison groups included 1,235 second graders and 402 third graders.

Students were measured using Text Reading and the Slosson Oral Reading Test (SORT-R).

- In all but one case, the mean text reading level for each cohort and the total group of second and third graders were similar to or slightly higher than the mean level of the random sample group.
- Reading Recovery children's mean achievement levels on the word recognition test (SORT-R) reflected average or expected performance for students at the end of second grade and slightly higher than average performance at the end of third grade.
- Almost all Reading Recovery children scored at or above grade level on Text Reading at the end of second and third grade. A large majority of Reading Recovery students (69% of second graders and 72% of third graders) scored at or above level on SORT-R, practically the same as the random sample group.

Authors concluded that Reading Recovery children, after becoming average or better readers in first grade, continued to learn along with their classmates and made substantial progress in reading after the specialized tutoring was discontinued.

Lesley College, 1997[10]



This study compared achievement of Reading Recovery students with a randomly selected group of their peers in second and third grades. The number of subjects in groups ranged from 74 to 220. Using six measures (the *Test of Oral Reading, Story Retelling, Slosson Test of Word Recognition, Dictation Task, Gates MacGinitie*, and classroom teacher ratings) the research found:

- Reading Recovery students scored as well as the random sample group on oral reading and retelling measures.
- On two measures (Slosson Test of Word Recognition and Dictation Task), Reading Recovery student performance was below that of the random sample group in second grade, but by third grade, Reading Recovery students were within an average band.
- Classroom teachers perceived most Reading Recovery children to be average on literacy behaviors.

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[9] Jaggar, A.M. & Simic, O. (1996). *A four-year follow-up study of Reading Recovery children in New York State: Preliminary report.* New York: New York University Reading Recovery Project, School of Education.

[10] Fountas, I.C. (1997). *Reading Recovery Annual Report.* Cambridge, MA: Center for Reading Recovery at Lesley College.

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"...An impressive and growing body of authoritative opinion and research evidence suggests that reading failure is preventable for all but a very small percentage of children."[1]

— John Jay Pikulski

TEN PRINCIPLES IN LITERACY PROGRAMS THAT WORK[2]

by Gay Su Pinnell

National attention is focused on early literacy, as several panels investigate and debate new directions in teaching children to read and write. The National Research Council Committee on the Prevention of Reading Difficulties in Young Children has analyzed research on effective programs for students who are having difficulty learning to read and write. This research meets the criteria established by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) for reliable, replicable research. Based on a survey of research that met the NICHD criteria, including the research presented in *The Prevention of Reading Difficulties in Young Children* (Snow, Burns, and Griffin, 1998), 10 principles provide guidance for designing early intervention programs.

Research has demonstrated that young readers having difficulty are mostly of average intelligence, and they have problems resulting from multiple and differing causes. With appropriate intervention, almost all can learn to read, provided instruction is intensive and begins early. It is therefore important that reading interventions be multi-dimensional to meet the diverse needs of learners.

The following discussion illustrates how Reading Recovery epitomizes the 10 principles in literacy programs that work. These principles operate throughout a Reading Recovery lesson and apply differently for each child who is learning to read and write (see box, below). The power of Reading Recovery lies in the integration of the 10 research-based components and the careful, sensitive application of these components during a Reading Recovery lesson.

PRINCIPLE #1

Phonological Awareness:
Teach students to hear the sounds in words.

Developing the ability to hear the sounds in words is explicitly recognized in Reading Recovery. When children are evaluated for selection for Reading Recovery, a measure of ability to hear and record sounds in words is used. Performance on this measure of phonological awareness provides data that teachers use daily as

THE READING RECOVERY LESSON

- Reading familiar stories
- Reading a story that was read for the first time the day before
- Working with letters and/or words using magnetic letters
- Writing a story
- Assembling a cut-up story
- Introducing and reading a new book

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1929 Kenny Road
Suite 100
Columbus OH 43210-1069
phone (614) 292-7111
fax (614) 292-4404
www.readingrecovery.org

[1] Pikulski, J.J. (1994, September). Preventing reading failure: A review of five effective programs. *The Reading Teacher*, 48:1, 30-39.

[2] Pinnell, G.S. (2000). *Reading Recovery: An analysis of research-based reading intervention*. Columbus, OH: Reading Recovery Council of North America.

they work individually with young children. Children selected for Reading Recovery are the lowest achievers in their first grade classes. Most, although not all, need instruction to develop phonological awareness.

PRINCIPLE #2

Visual Perception of Letters: **Teach students to perceive and identify letters of the alphabet.**

Students are assessed for letter recognition as part of the battery of tests used for selection. Most children who enter Reading Recovery need to learn more about letters, have very limited knowledge, and need to learn how to look at print.

Because Reading Recovery teachers work one-to-one every day and keep daily records, it is possible to identify with precision what the child knows or is confused about. Teachers begin with the known set of letters and work for expansion. For children with very low letter knowledge, teachers use movement and, if necessary, verbal and visual approaches to help the child remember the letter. Children write letters, construct their own alphabet book recording their knowledge to date, and work extensively with magnetic letters.

Program evaluation reports indicate that with very few exceptions, children who participate in the program can identify the 54 characters (upper and lower case letters of the alphabet, plus the print version of *a* and *g*) by the end of the 12- to 20-week program.

PRINCIPLE #3

Word Recognition: **Teach students to recognize words.**

First-grade children who are having extreme difficulty in learning to read and write generally know very few if any words. These children are just learning to look at print and to identify a few letters and sounds. It is helpful to build a small but expanding repertoire of words that the child knows in detail and can recognize quickly. With that goal in mind, early in the program, the teacher works to extend knowledge of words by having children make words using magnetic letters, trace words, and write words. Word cards may also be used. The words that the teacher selects to teach to children are

- words with high utility,
- words which occur most often in the language,
- words needed often in writing, and
- words the child almost knows and that a little more practice will bring to overlearning.

PRINCIPLE #4

Phonics/Decoding Skills: **Teach students to use simple and complex letter-sound relationships to solve words in reading and writing.**

In Reading Recovery lessons, children learn letter-sound relationships in several different ways, and they are taught to apply that knowledge in reading and writing. Word-solving skills are assessed on a word reading test, a test of hearing and recording sounds in words, and a test of text reading. Analysis of students' errors while they read texts reveals their current skills, and the teacher works from there. Through explicit instruction based on the individual's needs, students are taught to analyze words while reading text. Strategies include left-to-right letter or letter cluster sound analysis as well as noticing word parts. Several different components of the lesson foster the use of sounds and letter correspondence. All instruction is directed toward helping children learn how words work and the automatic, rapid recognition of words while reading for meaning.

If the child has low letter knowledge, the teacher will work intensively with letters; but when the child knows about 20 letters, the teacher will also begin to do some work with words in isolation. This

procedure is called *making and breaking*. Using magnetic letters, the teacher works with the child each day, moving from making words that the child knows to using predictable (regular) letter-sound sequences, to simple analogies, and to less predictable letter-sound sequences. The process is systematic in that the teacher has a precise record of the sound-letter sequences that the child already knows and can use; the expansion of knowledge moves from that place to more complex associations. The emphasis is on flexibility and on helping children learn principles to apply in solving many words.

PRINCIPLE #5

Phonics/Structural Analysis: **Teach students to use structural analysis of words and learn spelling patterns.**

In Reading Recovery, word analysis is integral to the reading and writing of continuous texts, and there is also explicit instruction in structural analysis of words. Words are considered in isolation to illustrate principles that help children gain control of the principles that underlie English spelling. There is a strong link to reading and writing, with the goal of helping children quickly use knowledge of word structure to take words apart and to spell words.

PRINCIPLE #6

Fluency/Automaticity: **Develop speed and fluency in reading and writing.**

In Reading Recovery, there is a strong emphasis on teaching for fluency and phrasing in oral reading. In the 30-minute Reading Recovery lesson, the majority of time is devoted to students' reading of continuous text. While it is important for children to read and use problem-solving skills on a new, challenging text every day, Reading Recovery teachers also make extensive use of rereading texts. Teachers select texts carefully to encourage fluency.

PRINCIPLE #7

Comprehension: **Teach students to construct meaning from print.**

Reading Recovery students are taught that what they read must make sense. Instruction helps students develop a variety of strategies directed toward helping children search for meaning as they read. In fact, the Reading Recovery teacher assures that children never lose meaning by careful text selection, careful introduction, and conversation about the story. These strategies (called a self-extending system) include helping children

- monitor their own reading and writing;
- search for cues in word sequences, in meaning, and in letter sequences;
- discover new things for themselves;
- repeat as if to confirm the reading or writing so far;
- self-correct, taking the initiative for making cues match or getting words right; and
- solve new words by using all the above strategies.

PRINCIPLE #8

Balanced, Structured Approach: **Provide a balanced approach so that literacy develops along a broad front and students can apply skills in reading and writing.**

Reading Recovery consists of an interrelated set of learning experiences. Teachers intentionally work to be sure that students make connections across components of the lesson framework. A key concept in Reading

Recovery is that "every new thing learned should be revisited in several other activities." A lesson consists of a variety of activities including reading and comprehending both familiar and new texts, writing a message of importance to the child, phonemic awareness, letter-sound correspondence, basic sight words, fluency, and teaching for strategic processing. It is this balance of activities, providing the opportunity to use skills in many ways, that allows for acceleration.

PRINCIPLE #9

Early Intervention: **Intervene early to undercut reading failure.**

Reading Recovery is a short-term (12 to 20 weeks) safety net intervention. Children are entered into Reading Recovery at a critical time in their school careers (age six or during first grade). Reading Recovery helps children make accelerated progress and catch up with their first-grade peers. The program also helps students continue to progress with good, ongoing classroom teaching. It is a supplementary opportunity and is not intended to replace classroom instruction.

PRINCIPLE #10

Individual Tutoring: **Provide one-to-one assistance for the students who are having the most difficulty.**

Reading Recovery is defined as one-to-one tutoring. It is not a classroom program; it is not a small group program. Quite simply, if the instruction is not one-to-one, it is not Reading Recovery.

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"If a state truly wants to impact student achievement, it would mandate and fund Reading Recovery programs in all its elementary schools."

— Janet L. Emerick, Superintendent, Lake Central School Corporation, St. John, Indiana

READING RECOVERY AND COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL REFORM

OBEY-PORTER COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL REFORM DEMONSTRATION (CSRD)

Reading Recovery was designed to be the early intervention component of a comprehensive literacy program. Although the Obey-Porter Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration (CSRD) Act does not list Reading Recovery as a comprehensive school reform model, it can be an important and effective part of any comprehensive reform model.

Reading Recovery embodies eight of the nine primary conditions that are a part of the qualifying factors of CSRD. More specifically, Reading Recovery includes:

1. **Effective, research-based, replicable methods and strategies**

   Reading Recovery is built on a foundation of more than 20 years of research about how young low-achieving children take on the process of reading and writing.

2. **Professional development**

   Reading Recovery teacher leaders provide graduate-level instruction and on-site follow-up coaching to teachers in the program.

3. **Measurable goals and benchmarks**

   Reading Recovery has specific measurable goals for each child, including bringing the child's reading and writing performance into the average range of performance in the class.

4. **Support within the school**

   Collaboration and team decision-making among key staff members are typical in schools with Reading Recovery.

5. **Parental and community involvement**

   Reading Recovery requires parental permission or notification. Teachers routinely communicate with parents about ways they can support their child's literacy learning at home.

6. **External technical support and assistance**

   Twenty-five university training centers provide ongoing technical support and assistance to the Reading Recovery teacher leaders they train.

7. **Evaluation strategies**

   Reading Recovery monitors implementation and measures results for every student.

8. **Coordination of resources**

   Reading Recovery teacher leaders and site coordinators are responsible for working with individual districts and schools to create the funding base required for implementation.

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1929 Kenny Road
Suite 100
Columbus OH 43210-1069
phone (614) 292-7111
fax (614) 292-4404
www.readingrecovery.org

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"Reading Recovery has one clear goal: to dramatically reduce the number of learners who have extreme difficulty with literacy learning and the cost of these learners to educational systems."

— Marie Clay (1994)

TEN FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Reading Recovery is a research-based intervention used in more than 10,000 schools in 49 states, the District of Columbia, Department of Defense Dependents Schools, plus Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand. Following are some of the common questions and issues identified over the past 15 years in the United States.

1. Is Reading Recovery a classroom program?

No. Reading Recovery helps low-achieving children make accelerated gains to reach the average range of reading performance in their class. To achieve this rapid learning, children are taught one-to-one. Each child's knowledge is assessed, then individual lessons are developed based on what that child already knows. Individual rather than group learning is essential because with group instruction, the teacher has to choose a compromise path, a next move for the group. Reading Recovery, in combination with strong classroom instruction, gives children the best chance for success.

2. Why does Reading Recovery serve only the lowest-achieving children?

There are two reasons. First, when children enter Reading Recovery, their progress cannot be predicted. Therefore, the most extreme cases are selected, and Reading Recovery serves as a period of diagnostic teaching. Second, if the lowest achievers are *not* selected, they may never catch up to the class average, thus requiring expensive special help programs in subsequent years. Any school or system not taking the lowest children is out of compliance with national standards and the principles underlying Reading Recovery implementation.

3. Does Reading Recovery drop children who are likely to fail?

No. The majority of children who do not complete Reading Recovery either move away or enter Reading Recovery too late in the school year to complete the needed instruction.

The Reading Recovery design calls for up to 20 weeks of instruction for children who need that much time. In the event that a child is removed prior to 20 weeks, it is usually because a specialist has made a report with alternative recommendations. Such a decision is made at the school level and involves the school team and the site's teacher leader. Any school or system arbitrarily removing children from Reading Recovery is out of compliance with national standards and the principles underlying Reading Recovery implementation. The child's data are always retained and included in evaluation.

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4. Does Reading Recovery raise the average achievement level for the class?

Reading Recovery does not necessarily increase mean (average) scores of the class. Tutoring increases the actual number of children who read within the average range of their first-grade cohort and decreases the number of children who need extra help.

5. What is the role of phonics in Reading Recovery?

Reading Recovery teachers understand the critical nature of helping children hear phonemes in words and recognize and use spelling patterns. During lessons, students apply sound-letter knowledge while reading and writing.

Reading Recovery teachers give specific and explicit attention to letters, sounds, and words, both while writing extended text and as direct instruction within each lesson. Reading Recovery recognizes that decoding must be purposeful. Teachers help children learn to use connections between letters and sounds. Students use their knowledge of how words work in order to solve problems with difficult words while maintaining comprehension.

6. Does Reading Recovery change the school system?

Reading Recovery was not designed to take the place of a comprehensive plan for literacy but to provide a safety net within a comprehensive literacy plan. However, many educators in the United States have discovered that Reading Recovery becomes a catalyst to identify and make needed changes. For example in one school district, classroom teachers (not Reading Recovery teachers) reported changes in their own practices — teaching for strategies, choosing books appropriately, assessing children, focusing on strengths, and teaching with higher expectations.[1]

7. Is Reading Recovery aligned with any specific reading or classroom approach?

Reading Recovery is not aligned with any specific classroom approach. For decades, educators and parents have debated the best approach for teaching children to read. Though teaching strategies change, research demonstrates that children have individual learning strengths, and no single strategy is best for all children.

Reading Recovery offers individual help for the lowest-achieving children who are struggling to read and write. In Reading Recovery, children develop a network of strategies for reading and writing that go beyond isolated skill knowledge. Children can use these strategies within any classroom approach that is taught effectively.

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[1] Blackburn, D.J. (1995). *Changes in a Chapter 1 program when Reading Recovery was implemented: Its impact on one district.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Texas Woman's University, Denton.

8. What is the cost of Reading Recovery?

Costs for Reading Recovery occur in two phases: start-up and ongoing expenses. Because teacher salary schedules and school operating expenses vary across districts and regions of the country, each school must calculate its own costs. A research report published by the Reading Recovery Council of North America discusses the following cost considerations.

> Districts generally report costs per child that range between $2,300 and $3,500. The investment reduces the number of children who need ongoing, expensive services. Because a large number of initially low achievers respond quickly and require only a short-term intervention, the resources saved can be used to support the small percentage who need longer-term help. Costs, then, must be considered against the costs of retention and/or special provisions for children requiring long-term specialist help.[2]

Though it is difficult to assess the costs and benefits of an early intervention program, several authors have demonstrated cost-effectiveness for Reading Recovery implementation.[3]

> "When you compare the success rate of Reading Recovery with other programs that keep children for years and never get them reading on grade level, Reading Recovery is a bargain!"[4]

START-UP COSTS TO ESTABLISH A READING RECOVERY TEACHER TRAINING SITE

- Teacher leader salary
- University tuition and living expenses
- Books and materials
- Building a one-way mirror and sound system for the training site

ONGOING COSTS OF READING RECOVERY

- Teacher leader salary, travel, and support
- Teacher salaries and benefits for time dedicated to Reading Recovery
- Books and materials for lessons and research
- Tuition for teacher education from university or college that grants academic credit
- Ongoing professional development for teacher leaders and teachers

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[2] Askew, B.J., Fountas, I.C., Lyons, C.A., Pinnell, G.S. & Schmitt, M.C. (1998). *Reading Recovery review: Understandings, outcomes, and implications.* Columbus, OH: Reading Recovery Council of North America, Inc. 36.

[3] Authors demonstrating cost-effectiveness include:

Dyer P.C. & Blinkney, R. (1995). Estimating cost-effectiveness and educational outcomes: Retention, remediation, special education, and early intervention. In R.L. Allington and S.A. Walmsley (Eds.) *No quick fix: Redesigning literacy programs in America's elementary schools.* Newark, DE: Teachers Press and the International Reading Association. 61-77.

Lyons, C.A., & Beaver J. (1995). Reducing retention and learning disability placement through Reading Recovery: An educationally sound cost-effective choice. In R. Allington & S. Walmsley (Eds.) *No quick fix: Redesigning literacy programs in America's elementary schools.* New York: Teachers College Press and the International Reading Association. 116-136.

Condon, M. & Assad, S. (1996, Winter). Demonstrating the cost effectiveness of Reading Recovery: Because it makes a difference. *The Network News,* Reading Recovery Council of North America. 12, 14.

Moriarity, D.J. (January 25, 1995). Our Reading Recovery Results: "Conclusive." *Education Week,* 36.

[4] Cunningham P.M. & Allington, S.R. (1994). *Classrooms that work.* New York: HarperCollins Publishers. 255.

9. What is the Reading Recovery research base?

Reading Recovery is based on substantial research about how children learn to read and write. Its roots are in Marie Clay's basic research in classrooms and clinics as well as intensive studies from other disciplines. Three strands of research make up the knowledge base.

- Reading Recovery assessment of children's reading and writing achievement is based on observation techniques that comprise *An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement*[5] developed by Clay. The *Survey* is widely used by classroom teachers, reading teachers, evaluators, and researchers because it has been developed through rigorous research. The *Survey* tasks have high reliability and validity.
- Clay also explored the question of "What is possible when we change the design and delivery of traditional education for the children that teachers find hard to teach?" A number of studies examined this question, including the original Reading Recovery design studies, field monitoring studies, and subgroup studies.[6]
- Reading Recovery is also subjected to ongoing evaluation through the collection of data on every child who enters and leaves Reading Recovery to determine what progress the child has made. Numerous follow-up studies document Reading Recovery's impact on children's literacy performance through the primary grades.

For a bibliography of Reading Recovery research, see the *Reading Recovery Review*[7].

10. Is Reading Recovery a private business?

Reading Recovery is not an independent business venture: it is a not-for-profit intervention that involves collaboration among schools, districts, and universities. In the United States, the name Reading Recovery® has been a trademark of The Ohio State University since December 1990, when action was taken to identify sites that meet the standards and guidelines for Reading Recovery. The purpose of the trademark is to protect the quality and integrity of Reading Recovery across multiple implementation sites. Use of the trademark is granted annually royalty-free to sites that meet quality standards.

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[5] Clay, M.M. (1993). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

[6] Clay, M.M. (1993). *Reading Recovery: A guidebook for teachers in training*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

[7] Askew, B.J., Fountas, I.C., Lyons, C.A., Pinnell, G.S., & Schmitt, M.C. (1998). *Reading Recovery review: Understandings, outcomes, and implications*. Columbus, OH: Reading Recovery Council of North America, Inc.

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"We went from 'reading is boring' to catching him reading under the covers with a flashlight. I hope this is one program that will never go away."

Ohio Parent

"I'm a believer (and I was pretty skeptical to begin with). These children are doing things in my classroom that I would never have dreamed possible."

Indiana Teacher

Vision

The vision of Reading Recovery Council of North America is that children will be proficient readers and writers by the end of the first grade.

Mission

The mission of Reading Recovery Council of North America is to ensure access to Reading Recovery for every child who needs its support.

Purpose

The purpose of Reading Recovery Council of North America is to sustain the integrity of Reading Recovery and expand its implementation by increasing the number of individuals who understand, support, and collaborate to achieve the mission of the Council.

Reading Recovery Council of North America (RRCNA) is a not-for-profit member organization serving Reading Recovery professionals, the educational community, children, and their families. Today's 11,000 Council members represent five categories: teachers, teacher leaders, trainers, site coordinators, and partners. The partner category includes classroom teachers, administrators, reading specialists, community members, parents, and others.

RRCNA members support Reading Recovery's mission, vision, and purpose. They also receive publications and ongoing professional development at national conferences, institutes, and leadership academies. RRCNA promotes Reading Recovery activities through education and advocacy programs and helps maintain the integrity and quality of Reading Recovery programs through standards and guidelines.

The Reading Recovery® registered trademark has been granted to The Ohio State University for use in the United States and to the Canadian Institute of Reading Recovery for use in Canada. Use of the trademark is granted annually on a royalty-free basis to Reading Recovery training centers and sites that meet quality standards. The purpose of the trademark is to protect the program's quality and integrity.

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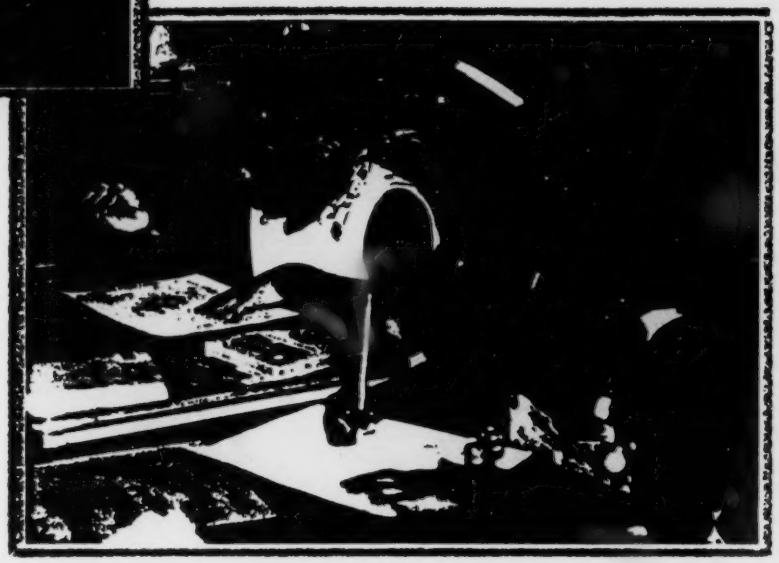

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1929 Kenny Road
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